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London, 30th January, 1839. [Wednesday Evening]

My dear Mrs. Torrey

I enclosed a parcel of Journals in a letter to you on Tuesday morning, which in the course of the day I put in the letter-bag at the N. S. American Coffee-house. I intended to go by the packet from Portsmouth on the 1st of tomorrow. I meant to have written at the same time to Mr. S. but engagements have prevented. I wrote him, however, a few days ago by the Great Western, and shall have another opportunity in a few days.

Yesterday morning we Hoker and myself breakfasted so late, and then paid a visit to Westminster Abbey, which we examined in every part, from the Poet's Corner to Henry VII. Chapel. You will have read much better descriptions of what is here to be seen than I am able to give. The Abbey itself is much finer than any other I have seen, and the Statuary is much of it, surprisingly beautiful. The extent of the building & the number of interesting objects crowded into it is wonderful. I was most interested in the tomb of Mary Queen of Scots, whose remains, ~~rested in the~~ bronze "hitherto" by her son rest under it. In the opposite aisle is the tomb of her vindictive rival Elizabeth; and the marble effigy, said to be a good likeness, represents a countenance anything but feminine. Henry VII. Chapel, both within and without, is the very poetry of architecture. It is like a fairy tale. The carved stone work of the roof within is so delicate, that you would almost expect the wind to set it in motion.

As we left the Abbey (where, by the way we were most thoroughly cheered with our long stay), we went into the Chapter House adjoining, a very antique building, crammed with old records and musty Manuscripts, and Sir Francis Palgrave kindly showed us the famous Domesday Book, which is in a perfect state of preservation; all the writing perfectly distinct, and so plainly executed that we could read it, here and there, with moderate facilities. He showed us also a copy of a treaty made with France by Cardinal Wolsey, of which the immense seal appended was cut in gold, and of the most elaborate and beautiful workmanship. We saw also ~~another~~ the original Papal Bull sent to Henry VIII, constituting him "Defender of the Faith"! We went from this to Westminster Hall; saw the large room which is

Very fine; looked into the Court of Exchequer, and saw the Lord Chancellor and other Judges in their full-bottomed wigs, most funny to behold I assure you; and the barristers with their great horse-hair wigs, frizzled on the top of their heads, but tied up in to nice and regular curls behind which fall over them upon their shoulders.

The case of the Canadian prisoners was then under consideration.

We then rode in an omnibus to the city, and visited St. Paul's Church, which grand as it is, does not show to advantage after Westminster Abbey.

The Monumental Statuary is very fine; some of it I would mention, but the extreme lateness of the hour obliges me discreetly to break off and finish my account of the day hereafter. Bon soir, or rather à vous!

Thursday evening.

I have been spending this evening in a very delightful way, that is - the old way of it. I have been sitting quietly and alone in my room, reading a file of New York papers kindly loaned me by Mr. Nuttman. It is now about 10 o'clock. I know not the hour; my watch, which has kept very good time for a long while, having received some injury is now at the watch-maker's. But I must bring up my journal to the present evening before I retire to bed. It commences where I broke off, with Tuesday. We went to dine by appointment, with Mr. Ward, the plant-case man, at 3. Mill, which house was appointed for the purpose of showing us the plant-cases &c. by day-light. Ward is one of the most obliging men I ever knew. I was perhaps a little disappointed in his plants, but this is the very worst season of the year, particularly in London, and his house, which is in the heart of the city near London Dock, is very badly situated as to light. But I have learned something from him, and feel confident that I shall be able to manage our plant-cases much better hereafter. Mr. Ward was there, and a truly kind-hearted old man he is.

I was to have returned in time to spend the evening at Bentham's, but owing to the stormy weather I did not reach my lodgings till it was too late.

On Sunday (a snowy day) I was out rather late, went to Bentham's, where I spent the whole morning, dined with him and Mrs. Bentham, three in all! - They have no children and live in the most cozy and quiet way you could imagine - and spent the whole evening with him, in

Labelling plants which he selected for me in the evening of the 21st inst.

To-day, J. Hooker having concluded to leave his department for London to-day, and had arrived at Ward's to meet us, we visited the famous conservatories of Loddiges! Miss Maria Hooker was with us, having come out from Hampstead for the purpose. It is a rather long ride to Hackney, but we were well repaid. The collection of Orchideae is immense and very beautiful; but a very small portion are now in flower. The Palm-house, ample and magnificent as it is, rather disappointed; it seemed not so much larger than that of the Edinburgh garden, and the plants are not in such nice order. Loddiges was very kind to me, and showed me a few pretty plants for Miss Hooker, I forgot for the moment that there was such a world of water between us, and was on the point of selecting some for you know who! I am not sure that I do not bring some after all.

Loddiges took us to his house and showed us his collection of Humming birds, which is the finest in the world. He has nearly 200 species, and usually several specimens of a kind, very beautifully mounted and carefully arranged. You can't imagine how beautiful they are! They are his great pets, and I do not wonder.

He returned through the city, stopped a few moments at the British Museum, dined with me at his hotel near me, and shortly after saw Jim Stuart in Grosvenor. I sent by him a copy of Gutter (over to Lindley & Hooker).

At 4 P.M. we went to the meeting of the Royal Society, heard a paper read of the Hon. J. J. Talbot on the power of objects not only to sit for, but to draw their own portraits, which has just been making a great noise in France. It is done by the influence of light of the sun upon paper prepared by Nitrate or Chloride of silver. Talbot seems to have found out all about it long ago, but the French have published first. I will write the Doctor more particularly about it, and send the Athenaeum containing the account when it appears.

I have recollecting to say that I received two days ago a very kind note from Lindley inviting me to come down to his place, dine with him on Sunday next, stay all night, spend Monday at his Herbicum, and meet a few botanical friends at dinner, and return next morning. I declined of course the invitation as far as it related to Sunday, but accepted it for Monday and offered to get down to Farnham Green in time to breakfast with him.

Monday evening, I have much to say, but I can not find another sheet or two by which to write this note. I have no time to revise it into my pocket. I have no time to revise it into my pocket.

This fine; looked into, I received another note from kind friend
out-chancellor which I may reach his house in time,
I had most sumptuous letter from Francis Bauer, enclosing some
Bureau vouchers, in return for a few of Bailey's I gave
him. I will send a portion to Prof. Bailey.

Friday Evening, Feb 1. 1859.

I spent the earliest part of the morning in my own room;
then went to Lambert's and commenced the examination of
Purkin's plants. After dining in a simple way by myself,
I went down to Bentham's, by appointment, to spend the evening
in looking out duplicate plants &c. I found him & Mrs. P.
sitting cozily together in the study. We had a cup of tea and some
chat and then fell to work until 1/2 past 11, when I came
away, walking as usual by 'Westminster' Abbey, & which I
often get very good nocturnal views.

Saturday Evening Feb 2. 1859.

For the first time I have spent to-day nearly the whole
morning in my room, employed in writing letters &c. I made
up a little parcel, which Mr. Putnam had offered to send for
me to New York, in a parcel he was about to send by the
Liverpool which is to leave Liverpool on Wednesday. I left
the parcel at his counting house just as he was making
up his bundle for Liverpool, and hope it will reach you safely.
I will also close this sheet and send it, within a letter to
Dr. S. by the same vessel. The little parcel is directed to Dr.
Torrey, to the Care of Wiley & Putnam, New York, I have kept
it very small, in order if possible that it may not be
opened at the Custom House. In case they choose to charge
duties upon it, the amount will be trifling. The Card-Case
as a little New Year present from me; for I would not that the
period should pass by without some little memento of the
kind. You will have no difficulty in finding out for whom
the silk socks are intended. As to the other articles I
will ask you to make such disposition among the girls as
you think best. I promised Lane a fruit-knife, I suspect she
has somehow been supplied before this time. If so perhaps you will
give the one in the parcel to Maggy. The pencil-cases have
better and neater than ours. Did not Eliza lose hers before she left home
from a hole in her pocket? I think the one in the parcel would
please her. Don't lose the little locket in opening the parcel.
It contains a bit of Herbert Gray's hair (all I can spare) when a
week old. I intend to have something like it myself, but will
wait till I go to Paris. Adieu. Love to all yours. Write to Paris in my name, I will
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